

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (canceled)

2. (currently amended) A communication network for a plurality of gaming devices comprising:

at least a first network, a second network, and a gaming device network; **and**

a host communication device capable of receiving data from said first and second network and transmitting said data to said gaming device network, and capable of receiving data from said gaming device network and transmitting said data to said first and second network;

**and, wherein** said gaming device network ~~comprising~~ **includes:**

at least two gaming devices, [;]

a first communication link provided between a first of said gaming devices and said host communication device, said first communication link comprising at least one optic fiber,

a second communication link **provided** between a last of said gaming devices and said host communication device, said second communication link comprising at least one optic fiber,

~~and an~~ **one or more** intermediate communication links **provided** between the first and last gaming device and any gaming device therebetween, each intermediate communication link comprising at least one optic fiber, **wherein** said first, second and **one or more** intermediate communication links ~~defining~~ **define** a communication loop having a first direction from said host communication device to said first gaming device, any intermediate gaming device and last gaming device back to said host communication

device, and having a second direction from said host communication device to said last gaming device, any intermediate gaming device and said first gaming device back to said host communication device, said host communication device and communications interface associated with each gaming device configured to bi-directionally communicate data along said communication loop in either said first or second direction, [;] and

a communication interface associated with each gaming device, each communication interface link including a first and a second physical connection for two of said optic fibers, a packet transmitter configured to transmit data to one of said optic fibers and a packet receiver configured to receive data from one of said optic fibers, and an interface between said packet transmitter and packet receiver and at least one control device of said gaming device, wherein communications between said gaming devices and each of said first network, said second network, and said gaming device network all take place over at least one single optic fiber selected from the group consisting of said first communication link and said second communication link ~~whereby communication between said gaming devices and said first and second network, as well as communications between said gaming devices themselves, occurs over said gaming devices network.~~

3. (currently amended) The communication network in accordance with Claim 2 ~~1~~ wherein said first network comprises a player tracking network.

4. (currently amended) The communication network in accordance with Claim 3 ~~1~~ wherein said second network comprises a progressive award system.

5. (currently amended) The communication network in accordance with Claim 3 wherein said at least one control device of at least one of said gaming devices comprises a player tracking controller.

6. (previously presented) The communication network in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said communication interface includes a resource manager in communication with said packet transmitter and packet receiver.

7. (currently amended) The communication network in accordance with Claim 2 ~~1~~ wherein said communication interface and host communication device are adapted to transmit data over said optic fiber using a visible light band.

8. (currently amended) A communication network permitting data to be transferred to and from devices associated with two or more different networks and a plurality of gaming machines, comprising:

a host device having a communication interface having at least two ports, said at least two ports each supporting duplex communications;

a plurality of gaming machines arranged in series along a gaming machine network loop;

a communication interface associated with each of said gaming machines, each communication interface including at least two ports, said at least two ports each supporting duplex communications, a data transmitter, a data receiver, one or more controllers of said gaming machine, and at least one link configured to route data from said one or more

controllers to said data transmitter and from said data receiver to said one or more controllers;

a plurality of communication links between a first port of said communication interface of said host device and a first port of a communication interface of a first of said gaming machines devices, between a second port of said communication interface of said first gaming machine device and a first port of a communication interface of ~~a last~~ another of said gaming machines device and between ports of communication interfaces of any intermediate gaming machines devices between said first and last gaming machine device, and between a second port of said communication interface of said last gaming machine device and a second port of said communication interface of said host, whereby said network loop comprises communication links extending from said first port of said communication interface of said host device to each gaming machine device in sequence, back to said second port of said communication interface of said host device, whereby data may be directed from said host device to said gaming machines devices and from said gaming machines devices to said host along said loop in a first direction to or from said first port of said communication interface of said host device and said gaming machines devices or in a second direction to or from said second port of said communication interface of said host device and said gaming machines devices, wherein at least one of said plurality of communication links comprises an optic fiber; and

at least a first and a second network linked to said gaming machine network via at least one communication link with said host device, wherein communications between said gaming machines and each of said first and second networks all take place over at least one single optic fiber selected from said plurality of communication links; and

~~said communication interfaces of said gaming devices including said ports, a data transmitter and a data receiver, and at least one interface between said data transmitter and said data receiver and one or more controllers of said gaming machine, said interface configured to route data from said one or more controllers to said transmitter and from said receiver to said one or more controllers.~~

9. (currently amended) The communications network in accordance with Claim 8 wherein each of said plurality of communication links comprise one or more optical fibers.
10. (previously presented) The communications network in accordance with Claim 8 including means for routing said data around said loop in said first or second direction in the event of a break in one of said communication links to ensure data transmitted.
11. (new) The communications network in accordance with Claim 8 wherein communications along one or more of said at least one communication link comprising an optic fiber are made using an IEEE-1394 protocol.
12. (new) The communications network in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said first network comprises a player tracking network and wherein said second network comprises a progressive award system.
13. (new) The communications network in accordance with Claim 12, further including a security monitoring network also linked to said gaming machine network.

14. (new) The communications network in accordance with Claim 13, wherein said security monitoring network and one or more of said communication interfaces for said plurality of gaming machines each include a backup power supply, wherein items having a backup power supply remain operational when main power is shut off or lost to the remainder of the gaming device or devices.

15. (new) A gaming device network, comprising:

a host communication device adapted to receive external data from a first disparate network and a second disparate network, to transmit said external data within said gaming device network, to receive internal data from said gaming device network, and to transmit said internal data to said first disparate network and said second disparate network;

at least two gaming machines adapted for accepting a wager, playing a game based on the wager and granting a monetary payout based on the result of the game, wherein each of said gaming machines includes a communication interface adapted to receive communications from said host communication device;

a first communication link provided between a first of said gaming machines and said host communication device, said first communication link comprising at least one optic fiber;

a second communication link provided between a last of said gaming machines and said host communication device, said second communication link comprising at least one optic fiber;

one or more intermediate communication links provided between said first and last gaming machines, as well as any other gaming machines therebetween, each of said one or more intermediate communication links comprising at least one optic fiber, wherein said first, second and one or more intermediate communication links define a communication loop extending

through said host communication device and each of said gaming machines, and wherein said host communication device and each communication interface associated with each gaming machine are all configured to bi-directionally communicate data along said communication loop in either of a first direction or a second direction, and wherein data originating from each of said gaming device network, said first disparate network and said second disparate network are all transmitted over a single optic fiber selected from the group consisting of said first communication link and said second communication link.

16. (new) The gaming device network in accordance with Claim 15 wherein communications along one or more of said communication links comprising an optic fiber are made using an IEEE-1394 protocol.

17. (new) The gaming device network in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said first disparate network comprises a player tracking network and wherein said second disparate network comprises a progressive award system.

18. (new) The gaming device network in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said host communication device is further adapted to receive external data from a third disparate network comprising a security monitoring network.

19. (new) The gaming device network in accordance with Claim 18, wherein said security monitoring network and one or more of said communication interfaces for said gaming machines each include a backup power supply, wherein said security monitoring network and said

communication interfaces having a backup power supply remain operational when main power is shut off or lost to one or more of said gaming machines.